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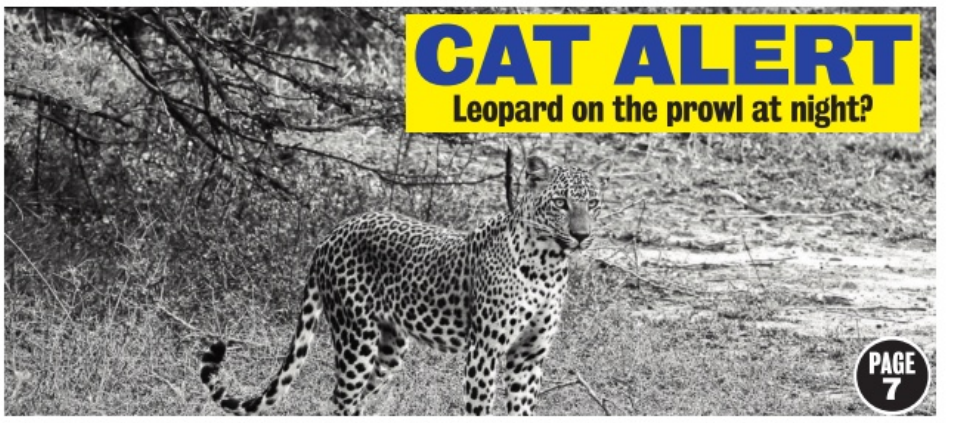
Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 19 | Humidity 68% Scattered Thunderstorms Sensex 64,112 | Nifty 19,140 | Gold 61,330 | Silver 73,221 | Dollar 83.27 | Euro 88.29 | GBP 101.05



Skywalk built after tragic death of girl in accident while she was crossing the road, now strewn with garbage

TRASH WALKING

Skywalk constructed by NHAI 6 years ago

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A skywalk constructed by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) six years ago is in the news for wrong reasons.

The skywalk in question constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 1 crore craves for the attention of the authorities. With no maintenance, the surroundings of the skywalk are strewn with garbage.

The pedestrians are grateful to the NHAI for constructing the much-needed skywalk after the gory incident in which a young girl was killed while crossing the road near Esteem Mall in February 2015.

They said the surroundings of the skywalk on both sides, including the bus stop adjacent to the military compound, are full of garbage. One can find a heap of plastic bottles and paper cups between the skywalk and the military compound wall.

"Garbage is not cleared for months near the skywalk. It is nauseating to see the heap of garbage near the skywalk," said a resident of Kempapura.

Expressing concern over the

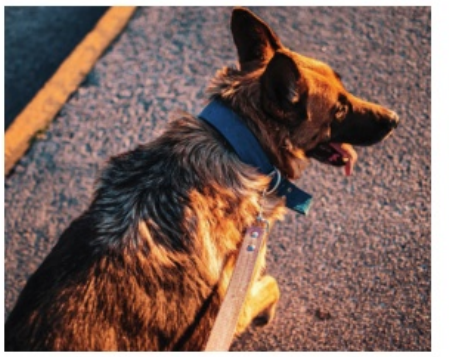
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"The entire skywalk is dirty. Some people urinate here and the place stinks

— Selwyn Mascarenhas, resident of the area

Reality bites

'Sizeable number of dog bite cases reported in city are of pet dogs'



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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has directed all Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) in the city to compulsorily bifurcate dog bite cases into pet dog bite and stray dog bite categories.

According to the officials, a sizeable number of dog bite cases reported in the city are of pet dogs. This bifurcation will help the civic agency in devising better management strategies for stray dogs for desirable outcomes.

"A good percentage of dog bite cases in the city are pet dog bites. PHCs, so far, have not been maintaining separate data on street dog and pet dog bite cases. However, from now on, we have directed them to maintain a record for a better understanding of the situation on the ground. Our concern is the number of dog bite cases by street dogs and we would like to evaluate if that number is going down. This data will also help us focus our efforts on areas with higher instances of street dog bite cases," said BBMP special commissioner (health) Dr KV Trilok Chandra.

Experts lauded step. They said the bifurcated data will help take away the presumption that the number of dog bite cases equals stray dog bite cases. While street dogs are usually maligned for every dog bite case, a large percentage of these cases are of pet dog bites, said animal welfare workers.

"BBMP's rabies helpline receives some

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Designs at best

Get your hands on some of the exclusive goods at the Hi Life Exhibition, where you can find your perfect fit. The exhibition presents gorgeous designer wear, wedding ensembles, designs for brides-to-be, everyday fashion apparel, jewellery, lehengas, clutches, furnishing, skin care products, and more.
Where: The Lalit Ashok
When: November 1-3; 10 am to 8 pm

02 Painting show

The National Gallery of Modern Art is presenting the in-house curated exhibition, 'Haripura Panels—Nandalal Bose (1882–1966)'. The exhibition showcases 77 iconic works from BGMA's permanent collection, along with a copy of the manuscript of the Constitution of India. It will be inaugurated by Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, the Governor of Karnataka.
Where: National Gallery of Modern Art
When: November 3; 3:30 pm onwards

03 Creative cure

As November starts sooner, don't miss a fest that aims to leave you feeling good in many ways. 'November Fest' brings food items, a flea market, handicrafts, jewellery, home decor, clothing, live music, kokedama, a painting competition, and more.
Where: YWCA of Bangalore City, 6th Block, 20th Main, adjacent to Koramangala Police Station, Koramangala
When: Saturday, November 4; 10:30 am to 7:30 pm

Bus fare hike on horizon?

Regulatory commission to be formed to decide fare hikes for BMTC; activists oppose GCC model that leans towards public transport losing to privatisation

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Who decides on bus fare hikes? Well, it is routine for the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) to take a call on the hike and refer it to the state government for approval. Following approval, the fare hike is implemented. However, as per the latest proposal, there is a plan to establish a regulatory commission that may decide the fare hike after consultation.

According to the latest document being discussed at the finance department, there is a proposal to have a regulatory commission similar to the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) to decide on fare hikes for cash-strapped state transport corporations like BMTC and KSRTC. If the proposal goes through, the state transport corporations will need to submit their reasoning for fare hikes, and the regulatory commission will decide whether to hike the fare and by how much.

Another significant decision by BMTC is that it may not purchase new buses as it will procure buses only in Gross Cost Contract (GCC) mode. According to the latest government document, BMTC shall procure buses in the future only on the GCC model, as recommended by the Srinivas Murthy committee. Furthermore, BMTC shall take steps for the implementation of online and offline board ticketing.

BMTC is to induct 921 Tata Electric buses in a phased manner

> **"There are problems with the GCC model. We are disproportionately focusing. Under this model, the operators are paying their drivers less than BMTC drivers**
> –an activist

It may be noted that the BMTC is soon set to induct 921 Tata Electric buses in a phased manner by March 2024. BMTC will operate these buses under the FAME-II scheme of the Government of India on a GCC model basis under M/s.CESL. The key points of operation for these buses are as follows: They are 12.0-metre-long, low-floor electric buses with a floor height of 400 mm. The buses feature comfortable seating for 35 passengers and easy entry and exit due to their low-floor configuration.

BMTC participated in the Grand Challenge to add 1,500 electric buses to its fleet. Under the GCC basis, the operating fare for these buses will be Rs. 41.01 per km. The Ministry of Heavy Industries, Central Government, provided a subsidy for the 921 Tata Electric Buses, enabling BMTC to operate these electric buses on a GCC model. Opportunity charging will be done for 45 minutes for each bus, and ten depots have been identified to operate these electric buses. The identified depots are as follows: Shanthinagar, Jayanagar, Hennur, Deepanjali nagar, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Peenya 2nd Stage, K R Pura, Seegehalli, and Hoskote.

However, not everyone is happy with the GCC model. A few bus activists say that BMTC must avoid this model, which leans towards public transport losing itself in the hands of private companies.

"There are problems with the GCC model. We are disproportionately focusing. Under the GCC model, the operators are paying their drivers less than BMTC drivers. The subsidy is forcing BMTC to use the GCC model. The model supports the bus manufacturing industry rather than addressing the transport woes of commuters. In other words, the push for electrification is a push for the GCC model. Eventually, if all the buses are electrified under the GCC model, all the buses within BMTC will be owned by private operators. This could lead to a power grab where the private operators will be able to dictate the terms and conditions in the future," said an activist.

Meanwhile, the finance department has approved the BMTC proposal to recruit 2,500 conductors. The recruited conductors are to be deployed in a phased manner over the next three years, depending on the actual requirements and financial position of BMTC. The salary shall be borne by the own resources of BMTC, and no state government support is to be sought.

Free health screening to help working folks

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A specialised focused group free clinic, 'Respiratory Occupational Health Clinic', has been established to provide screenings for vulnerable populations, such as police officials, BBMP workers (pourakarmikas), BMTC staff working on the ground, and construction workers exposed to pollutants and allergies.

The free clinic is initiated by Vaayu Chest and Sleep Services, and on Sunday screening was carried out for 40 Jayanagar traffic police officials. To the surprise of many traffic police officials, they were diagnosed with hypertension, allergies, and even lung issues that were undiagnosed earlier.

During the screening process, the clinic checked the vital signs of the individuals, including blood pressure, oxygen saturation levels, and heart rate. Expert chest physician and ENT consultations were provided, and otoscope examinations were carried out. Lung function tests were performed, with detailed tests for those who needed them. After the screening, free medication and detailed prescriptions were given, along with follow-up appointments for those requiring further care.

During the screening process, the clinic checked the vital signs

Dr Ravindra Mehta, Founder Director of Vaayu Chest and Sleep Services, also serving as the Chief of Pulmonology at Apollo Hospitals Bangalore, said, "The initiative is aimed at screening individuals at a higher risk of respiratory problems and providing comprehensive outpatient services early. It also includes a follow-up mechanism. Additionally, when we identify issues, it encourages policymakers to take action and implement measures. Diseases like asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are on the rise, with COPD being the largest in the world currently."

During the screening of police officials, many were unaware of their blood pressure issues until our comprehensive screening revealed the health issues they were facing, he explained.

Last month, the clinic screened over 10 construction workers, and on Sunday, even more police officials came forward for screening. The team from the Respiratory Occupational Health Clinic plans to extend its services to BBMP, BMTC, and other organisations for further screenings. A dedicated team of healthcare professionals, including chest physicians, ENT specialists, nurses, pharmacists, and others, collaborates at the clinic.

Dr Mehta added, "As more vulnerable individuals come forward for screening, we will gather valuable data on the health problems they face, enabling us to contribute to early diagnosis and disease management."

Sub-Inspector Venkatesh from Jayanagar Traffic Police Station said, "The initiative was of great help to all the police officials. As we are exposed to pollution, it's essential for people in our line of work to receive this kind of care, and with comprehensive screening, we were able to find out the issues."

Manipal Hospitals: Your Trusted Stroke-Ready Healthcare Provider

India is witnessing a concerning rise in stroke cases, with the risk higher for younger and middle-aged people. Around 1,85,000 stroke cases are reported a year, making it the second most common cause of death in the country. With one stroke occurring every 40 seconds and one stroke-related death every 4 minutes, there is a need for awareness efforts on stroke to transform into a stroke-ready society.

Experts from Manipal Hospitals organised a seminar to spread awareness about strokes

A Timely Triumph

Stroke is a common occurrence that requires timely treatment. One such case involves Mr. Hemkanth Sharma, a 37-year-old physiotherapist, who faced dragging feet and difficulty walking on September 5, 2021. He consulted Dr. Chetan Kumar A, Consultant – Neurology at Manipal Hospital, Varthur Road on September 6, 2021. But, his symptoms worsened during the consultation, leading to immediate emergency imaging tests (MRI and CT scan) for a stroke diagnosis. Treatment commenced without delay. Speaking about his experience and recovery, Mr. Hemkanth said, "I was under significant post-COVID stress and had briefly stopped exercising before the stroke. Identifying the signs early and consulting the doctor promptly allowed for timely initiation of stroke treatment, resulting in my complete recovery. I stress the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and managing stress in stroke prevention and management."

Insights from Experts

Manipal Hospitals organized an awareness event on the occasion of World Stroke Day 2023 to emphasize the importance of identifying stroke signs even before it occurs, enabling timely access to emergency medical care. Two panel discussions featured eminent neurologists and neurosurgeons from Manipal Hospitals, elaborating on stroke signs and the preparedness required during unforeseen events. Residents within a 5-kilometer radius of all Manipal Hospitals in Bengaluru were invited. The panel discussions featured eminent neurologists and neurosurgeons from Manipal Hospitals, elaborating on stroke signs and the preparedness required during unforeseen events. Gracing the event, Dr. Murali Srinivasan, Chief of Medical Services at Manipal Hospitals, expressed, "Stroke poses a significant threat and impacts millions of people in India. Awareness of early stroke identification is crucial to reducing the risk of death or serious disability. We understand the urgency it imposes on a healthcare facility, and we can assure you that Manipal Hospitals, with 30+ years of expertise, stands as a stroke-ready hospital to handle such emergencies and bring hope to those in need."Dr. Pramod Krishnan, HOD & Consultant - Neurology at Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road, stated, "Manipal Hospitals, being a stroke-ready hospital, has been and continues to manage stroke through timely medical intervention within the Golden Hour. We believe that through awareness sessions like this, we can bring down the rate of death and permanent disability with our expertise and by following all the standard protocols and guidelines set for stroke care."

QR Code-The Saviour

The adept team at Manipal Hospitals remains primed for action. In 80% of cases, patients undergo CT scans

within a swift 20 minutes, initiating treatment within the next 60 minutes. A recent innovation, the location-based SOS QR codes, in tandem with Manipal Ambulance Rescue Services (MARS), ensures hospitals can reach stroke victims within a mere 25 minutes, facilitating prompt patient transportation. The cutting-edge SOS QR code initiative, strategically placed in over 40 locations, including numerous traffic signals throughout the city, has gained widespread acceptance. Launched by Manipal Hospitals, Bengaluru, this groundbreaking QR code innovation serves a dual purpose. Scanning the QR code not only pinpoints the location but also triggers an immediate alert to the nearest ambulance.

Age No Bar

Dr. Chetan Kumar A (Consultant – Neurology at Manipal Hospital, Varthur Road) said that while it was considered a condition of the elderly, recent years have seen an increase in stroke cases among younger age groups, including individuals in their twenties and thirties. "Stress, genetic factors, and underlying risks such as cardiovascular problems, smoking, alcohol, and lack of physical activity are major contributors. In Mr. Hemkanth's case, there were no strong identifiable causes, as he had no underlying health conditions or habits posing a stroke risk. Stress and genetic factors may have played a role. The significance of early detection in stroke treatment, explaining that, in Mr. Hemkanth's case, since the stroke was detected early and symptoms were not severe, it was managed medically without the need for advanced treatment, leading to a successful reversal and complete recovery."

Manipal Hospitals is 'Stroke-Ready'

A stroke, often referred to as a "brain attack," can lead to devastating consequences such as loss of life, paralysis, and lifelong dependency. Recognizing its early signs is crucial for patients and caregivers. Stroke emergencies can occur at any time, and the first hour, known as the Golden Hour, is critical in determining the prognosis. This underscores the need for a Stroke Ready facility like Manipal Hospitals to be available in the locality, strictly adhering to stroke care protocols, with equipped Emergency Response and diagnostic teams available 24/7. Manipal Hospital not only provides critical care but also champions proactive measures to prevent future occurrences. The stroke-ready status reflects a commitment to the well-being of our community, where every individual can trust in the expertise and readiness of Manipal Hospital in the face of this urgent medical condition.

Experts have you covered: All you need to know about strokes

"In a stroke, the aftermath is profound, leaving behind disabilities that become not just a personal burden but also extend to impact your family and even the community at large."
Dr Murali Srinivasan
Chief of Medical Services. Consultant Neurologist, Manipal Hospitals

"Blood pressure and diabetes are two crucial risk factors demanding our attention. Early detection and treatment of these conditions are paramount to preventing complications."
Dr Jayachandran R
Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Millers Road

"When a stroke strikes, it manifests in seconds and minutes, affecting the eyes and brain. Any sudden loss of vision or impairment in the field of vision should be treated urgently, unless proven otherwise."
Dr. Shiva Kumar R
Head and Senior Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Sarjapur

"A stroke is a critical emergency, leading to permanent disability and, ultimately, death. Since 2000, we have witnessed significant advancements in therapies that can reverse disability. Administering these therapies early is crucial to reversing the damage."
Dr. Abhinav Raina
Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Whitefield

"By recognizing warning signs and seeking medical attention, the detection of potential stroke occurs before the event. This allows for timely initiation of treatment, reducing the risk of a future stroke."
Dr. Chetan Kumar A
Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Varthur

"Every stroke is an ischemic stroke within a golden hour window. Initially, this window was 0-3 hours, extended to 3-4.5 hours, and with technological advancements, we can now extend it from 4.5 hours to 9 hours."
Dr. Srinivas Raju
Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Hebbal

"A block in brain circulation during a stroke causes damage. Swift reversal is crucial for faster recovery with minimal disability. The concept of 'time is brain' emphasizes the urgency, as 2 million neurons die every minute until treatment begins. Unlike skin or other tissues, there is no regrowth for neurons."
Dr Pramod Krishnan,
HOD & Consultant - Neurology, Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road

"In stroke, restoring blood flow to the brain is paramount. The goal is to reestablish normal function disrupted by the stroke, making it a fundamental rule in stroke management."
Dr. Bopanna K M
HOD & Consultant - Neurosurgery, Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road

"We need an expert team to treat a stroke and Manipal is the right place for timely and best treatment as we have an expert team. When a patient is brought in, we need to identify whether he has a stroke or not that can be identified by imaging. Based on scanning, we will come to know if s/he has a stroke or not."
Dr. Ullas V Acharya
Consultant - Neuroradiology, Radiology, Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road

"All our cluster hospitals in Manipal are stroke-ready, providing 24/7 thrombectomy and thrombolysis treatments. We have established protocols, equipment, and treatment modalities in place to ensure timely care."
Dr Puneeth K T
Consultant - Vascular And Neuro-Interventional Radiology, Manipal Hospital Millers Road

For more information contact
1800 203 2999

Take it to robotic cleaners

BBMP calls for tenders for 'regular' operation and maintenance of 299 e-toilets; experts suggest autonomous robots for cleaning premises

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The largest tender is for South Zone with 80 units at a cost of Rs 109.44 lakh

Aiming to improve the poor condition of e-toilets in the city, BBMP has called for tenders for regular operation and maintenance of the 229 e-toilets and 34 units in the city for a cost of Rs 3.44 crore. The civic body had to re-tender the service due to not finding successful bidders.

Often, e-toilets are criticised for their poor maintenance and unhygienic conditions. Despite having an auto-flush mechanism, the facilities need to be regularly cleaned and maintained. The poor condition could be attributed to not finding successful bidders for maintaining and operating the facilities.

With the same aim, BBMP has now called for a tender for eight packages across all zones. The largest tender is for a package South Zone with 80 units at a cost of Rs 109.44 lakh. The tender has been called for three years. "We are re-tendering for the services because we didn't have any successful bidders. As part of the tender, the successful bidders will have to ensure water supply, electricity, and regular cleaning. The services will be taken up in two shifts: 6-2 and 2-8," said a senior BBMP official.

As part of the services, they will also be held responsible for the electricity and water charges. They will also have to provide a feedback-integrated system, which is required for grading the e-toilets, submitting fitness certificates every year, supplying services to users free of cost, and not advertising on e-toilets.

The costs borne by service providers should include sweeper/cleaner wages, supervision charges, transportation, cleaning tools, equipment, water, electricity, and other relevant charges.

> **"Autonomous robots will be able to maintain hygiene in these e-toilets. The robots can be fitted with sprayers or other required toold**
>
> –a robotic expert from ARTPARK

According to BBMP, there are 229 units and 34 modular toilets. There are eight units in the Dasarahalli Zone, eight units in the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Zone, 12 units in the Yelahanka Zone, 22 units in the Bommanahalli Zone, 26 units in the East Zone, four units in the Mahadevapura Zone, 69 units in the West Zone, and 80 units in the South Zone. Additionally, there are 34 modular units as part of the tender.

In August, BBMP faced a rap from the High Court for not maintaining the public toilets, and the officials had prepared a draft proposal in response.

The e-toilets were established in 2014 at a cost of Rs 5.56 lakh each under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Meanwhile, robotics experts say that the issue can easily be solved by robots.

"Autonomous robots will be able to maintain hygiene in these e-toilets. Fitted with a robotic arm, these autonomous robots can be used to clean the premises. Further, the robots can be fitted with sprayers or other required tools. Using environment mapping technology, we can schedule the activities," said a robotics expert from ARTPARK.

However, experts added that it could be a costly enterprise for BBMP as each robot may cost around Rs 4–5 lakh.

Kithaganur Lake: A neglected heritage

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Kithaganur Lake has deteriorated to an alarming extent

Kithaganur Lake, a historic water body dating back over a century, once cherished by the community for leisure and even as a source of drinking water, now finds itself in a state of neglect and degradation. The lake, under the jurisdiction of the gram panchayat, has been suffering from a lack of development efforts and environmental issues that have taken a toll on its once-pristine condition.

Residents in the area have fond memories of swimming in the lake, but over the years, it has deteriorated to an alarming extent. One significant problem has been the consistent dumping of garbage near the lake's banks, turning it into a hotspot for pollution. Additionally, a lack of maintenance has allowed weeds to overtake a significant portion of the lake, hindering sunlight penetration and potentially leading to fish kills.

Balaji Raghotham, lake activist, told BM that the lake was once a source of drinking water and was very clean. "However, without adequate efforts to maintain and monitor it, it has deteriorated. Garbage dumping and weed infestation are taking a toll on this beautiful water body," he said.

He also pointed out that there have been reported encroachments on the lake, and a thorough survey to address the issue is long overdue. The cumulative lack of maintenance and attention has pushed the lake to the brink of decline.

Lorelle, another concerned resident, lamented, "The lake has been in a deplorable state for many years, with no signs of development. People rarely visit due to the absence of proper pathways for leisurely strolls. It is important to initiate a complete restoration and development plan to rescue the lake."

In an attempt to address the issue, Balaji Raghotham contacted the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), requesting a demonstration of the Jaldost airboat to clear out the weeds, a strategy successfully employed at Ulsoor Lake in 2019.

However, there might be a glimmer of hope. Sources have revealed that plans are underway to potentially develop Kithaganur Lake under a public-private partnership (PPP) model. The plan is still in the discussion stage.

whatsapp MIRROR
9591233247
Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

No buses
Margondanahalli

The Margondanahalli area, especially the stretch opposite Diamond College connecting to TC Palya Baldwin School, has been devoid of bus services for years.

Dump yard
Indiranagar

In front of Chinmaya Mission Hospital in Indiranagar, the pavement has become a dumping ground for garbage. Additionally, two-wheelers occupy the road, hindering vehicular movement, while autos are parked in no-parking zones.

Repair soon
Lavelle Road

The intersection of Lavelle Road and 4th Cross, adjacent to High Gloss, continues to pose a hazard. The dug-up area from months ago remains unfixed, creating a precarious situation for commuters.

Yet another fire: 18 buses turn into ash

Exact cause of blaze at workshop not identified; citizens raise alarm about frequent fire incidents

PICS: KAUSHIK JN

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Eighteen buses were completely gutted, after a fire broke out at a bus workshop in Veerabhadra Nagar, South Bengaluru, on Monday. Many buses were parked at SV Coach Works, a business that specialises in making bus bodies, where the fire broke out.

According to some sources, the buses' diesel tanks exploded during the incident leading to smoke all over the area. As soon as flames and smoke were noticed, the authorities were notified.

Police sources claim that Srinivas, the owner of the business, is now absconding. Sources say that numerous buses were at the facility for servicing and upkeep and out of 28 buses, 18 caught fire.

According to eyewitnesses, the fire started off the Outer Ring Road close to PES University at around 11:30 am. Ten buses were untouched by the fire, while at least 18 buses belonging to different private bus firms were totally destroyed, according to police sources.

The fire control room received a call at 11:45 am, and seven fire tenders and 80-100 firefighters were dispatched. When the fire started, there were about 20 workers on the property, but they all made it out unharmed.

"As the workers were mending one of the bus' emergency exits, other buses parked nearby caught fire. But the origin of the fire has not yet been determined," a fire department representative stated.

Some sources also claim that the fire might have started due to a short circuit.

> **"As the workers were mending one of the bus' emergency exits, other buses parked nearby caught fire. But the origin of the fire has not yet been determined**

Videos of the thick smog coming from the incident of the fire went viral all over social media with netizens talking about the frequent fire accidents in the city.

With three major fire incidents reported in the city in the last 20 days, the government has directed officials to step up their efforts.

FIRE ALARM

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda proposed upgrading the fire brigade as a precautionary measure to avert future fire disasters. In a review meeting with a team of officials led by Director General of Police Kamal Pant on Monday, the minister highlighted that three fire disasters occurred in Bengaluru within the last 20 days. He stressed the need for the fire brigade to proactively prevent such incidents from happening not only in urban areas but across the entire state.

"The recent firecracker warehouse disaster in Attibele resulted in the tragic death of 16 labourers from Tamil Nadu, while a cafe fire disaster in Koramangala on October 19 claimed two lives and left several injured. A loss of Rs 3 crore was reported from the Haj Bhavan fire. Hence, the brigade should strategise preventive measures in light of such tragic events. In addition to focusing on upgrading the fire brigade, I have instructed the officials to scrutinise fire prevention measures when granting permission for the construction of new buildings. Stringent checks and approvals should be part of the building construction permission process to ensure fire safety," he said.

Ward committee meets: Dazed and confused

Citizens say meetings conducted only if prodded; officials not transparent about budget

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BBMP had allocated Rs 60 lakh to each ward, of which Rs 20 lakh would be allocated for pothole filling

It's been months since the assembly election, but ward committees in the city are yet to resume in full swing. In areas where ward committees are active, citizens say there is no transparency about the budget expenditure and they are told that funds will be allocated after BBMP elections.

Since the model code of conduct was placed during elections, ward committees have become inactive in several areas, citizens told BM. However, it should be noted that ward committees were gaining popularity as per a study published in February 2023. In a recent interaction with reporters, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar had spoken about the possibility of forming ward committees before the BBMP elections. Additionally, BBMP also allocated Rs 15 lakh for pothole filling to all 225 wards with the ward committees overseeing the work.

Ward committees were formulated to allow citizens to participate in ward-level decisions. BBMP had allocated Rs 60 lakh to each ward, out of which Rs 20 lakh would be allocated for pothole filling, Rs 20 lakh for borewell repairs and Rs 20 lakh on footpath fixing.

Residents complain that ward committee meetings that were ideally expected to happen on the second Saturday of the month, now happen only on the insistence of citizens.

Grievance address

"Ward committees have now turned into grievance address mechanisms. At the open forum, citizens can air their concerns but these meetings are held only if citizens send reminders. We can address both civic issues as well as regulatory issues. We are seeing some action taken based on our complaints. If citizens prod about budget expenditure, officials give some response. But we are yet to see complete voluntary and transparent sharing of budget expenditure. BBMP should ideally issue a handbook detailing the method and procedure to hold ward committee meetings," said Sandeep Anirudhan, a civic activist.

Another citizen Vinod Jacob from CV Ramannagara said ward committees do happen but roughly every three months. "The minutes of the meeting have not been taken down and read. Officials from BESCOM and BWSSB do not turn up. Citizens do raise some issues but there is hardly any transparency," he said.

Another citizen Allen told BM that meetings are being held once a month. "Meetings are held and we do raise issues about solid waste management. Citizens along with Sensing Local recently conducted an audit of the footpaths. But BBMP claims that funds are yet to be allocated. According to officials, funds will be allocated after BBMP elections," he added.

Tiger claw case: Jaggesh gets relief from HC

The Karnataka High Court on Monday gave relief to BJP MP and Kannada actor Jaggesh by staying the notice issued to him by the forest department for wearing a tiger claw pendant. A bench headed by Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the order.

The forest department had issued the notice and conducted search operations at the residence of Jaggesh in Bengaluru after a video in which he proudly displays the tiger claw pendant claiming that it was a gift from his mother and is a real tiger claw went viral on social media.

The action by the forest department was questioned by Jaggesh. His counsel submitted that "The notice issued by the forest department sleuths should be withdrawn. Before answering the notice, a team of 14 officers had raided the house and thrown all articles of the house here and there. I have been defamed based on the statement made in the interview. In this background, the action by the forest department must be declared as illegal."

Senior counsel Prabhuling Navadagi, who appeared for Jaggesh, maintained that the action against his client was against the law.

Following the arrest of a Big Boss contestant for wearing a locket made of tiger's claw, various organisations had demanded that the government should also act against celebrities sporting the animal's claw. As people started sharing the pictures of celebrities and politicians wearing such lockets and demanding action against them, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre had said "no one will be spared." After this, celebrities are under pressure to prove their innocence. Former MLC and Congress leader PR Ramesh had lodged a complaint with the Forest Department's Additional Secretary Javed Akthar against Jaggesh. Shivakumar, of the Vande Mataram Social Service Organization, had said that Big Boss contestant Varthur Santhosh has been arrested but no action has been taken against celebrities. **–IANS**

BM Trippin' Tales

Nandi Hills: Ropeway project work to start soon

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Karnataka's first ropeway project for the hill station closest to Bengaluru, Nandi Hills, may see forward movement as the current government has shown interest in the facility. Higher Education Minister Dr MC Sudhakar said, "The ropeway project will be taken up soon. I inspected the site with officials on Friday, and as per the previous plan, the company that has bagged the tender will be allowed to construct a ropeway. I will soon hold a meeting with forest department officials and farmers on making the land available for the project. We have decided to construct a 2.93-km-long ropeway. Before this, the horticulture department has to get an NoC from the forest department, and the land from farmers has to be acquired. I have asked all the officials to take up these tasks on a priority basis."

Nandi Hills is bordered by two districts. While the project requires nine acres in Chikkaballapur district, another seven acres is required in Bengaluru Rural district. A meeting will be held with the farmers soon.

The ropeway is to be constructed in 18 months. Earlier, the project cost was estimated to be Rs 93.4 crore, but the delay has made it dearer and now pegged at Rs 115 crore. The proposal encompasses ropeway construction, management, and maintenance over a span of 30 years. Around 20 support pillars would be erected from the foothills to the terminal point, with the tallest pillar projected to reach a height of 35 metre. According to the stipulated design, the initial capacity of the ropeway was slated for 25 cabins, potentially expandable to 50 cabins, accommodating up to 10 passengers each. Environmentalists have opposed the initiative and cautioned against the potential detriment to biodiversity.

Traffic chaos

The Nandi hill route is plagued by traffic chaos. Even on Saturday, an overwhelming crowd headed to Nandi Hills; many had to walk for kilometres to reach the summit point on Sunday. Travellers reported that numerous vehicles were waiting at the foothills. However, the situation turned chaotic due to the lack of lane discipline and the winding roads. Now plans are underway by the Chikkaballapur district administration to restrict vehicles from going up to Nandi Hills. They are considering establishing a parking plaza near the foothills (Nandi Hills cross). If everything goes as planned, visitors to Nandi Hills may have to park their vehicles and use government-run vehicles or KSRTC buses to reach the top. Officials have already identified 3.5 acres for the plaza. A detailed plan has been submitted to the horticulture department. "During weekends, around 4,000 two-wheelers and 1,500 cars head there. So the plan is to park them at the foothills. From there, public buses will ferry people," Sudhakar said.

Tourist circuit

Sudhakar said that a committee would be formed to suggest ways to improve facilities at Nandi Hills. There is a plan to promote a tourist circuit including Devanahalli Fort, Nandi Hills, Bhoga Nandeeshwara Temple, Ghati Subramanya Temple, Vidurashwatha, and Muddenahalli.

File photo of a waterfall at Nandi Hills after rain

Do not go gentle into that good night

Big cat out of the bag, forest officials ask AECS Layout residents not to step out alone at night

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With a leopard being spotted near AECS Layout and Singasandra Layout, forest department officials have been asking people not to walk alone. Forest personnel have been patrolling the area and announcing over the public address system that people should not walk outside and that if they do need to go out at night, they should walk in groups.

A leopard was recently spotted walking in front of a car in Singasandra. A woman who saw the big cat said, "We were returning home around 10 p, on Friday when a leopard passed in front of our car. The leopard passed very close from one end to the other. For the last three days, people have been scared to come out in the evening. No one has even been coming out to turn on the street lights in the evening. We have been told that the leopard may have moved to another area. Forest personnel have been visiting the area and have cautioned us not to go out at night."

> **Leopards are generally shy, so they avoid people. People should not attempt to get close to the animal to take videos or pictures** – Expert's advice

Sharadamma, a resident of the area, said, they are scared to go out. "We wonder how a leopard could venture into the city. The streets here have less traffic, so many kids used to play cricket on the road. However, since the news of the leopard sighting, even kids have stopped playing on the road, and we are not allowing them to leave the home."

What to do in face of danger

Experts say that leopard sightings in the city are not new. In previous years, big cats were spotted near Turahalli, Yelahanka, and Kengeri. They say that leopards have always been there on the outskirts of Bengaluru, but now people are noticing them more often due to the widespread use of CCTV cameras and the rapid spread of news (including fake news) on social media. Experts have advised people to remain calm and not panic. Leopards are generally shy, so they will avoid people. People should not attempt to get close to the animal to take pictures or videos. Leopards should not be cornered by mobbing around them, as this will make them panic and could lead to life-threatening accidents. If a leopard enters a compound or an apartment complex, it is best to leave it alone, and it will head back to wherever it came from.

Situation of conflict

Wildlife scientist Sanjay Gubbi has written to the Chief Minister stating that 50% of human-leopard conflict incidents occur in five districts: Ramanagara, Tumakuru, Mandya, Mysuru, and Hassan. However, the number of conflict incidents is also on the rise in Ballari, Koppal, and Kolar. Gubbi says that of the 27,418 revenue villages in Karnataka, human-leopard conflict occurs in over 700 villages and is increasing daily. Outside protected areas (national parks and wildlife sanctuaries), poaching of leopards' natural prey such as chital, sambar, four-horned antelope, barking deer, black-naped hare, and jungle fowl has increased. Leopards shift their diet to domestic animals such as sheep and goats due to decreased natural prey outside protected areas. Gubbi also says that increased use of CCTV cameras and the recording of leopards on CCTV cameras are leading to the assumption that there is an increased occurrence of leopards. Similarly, the circulation of fake information on social media is also creating fear among people. He had earlier requested the State Government to start a curriculum of a minimum of one week of training on human-wildlife conflict in the Forest Watcher, Forest Guard, Deputy Range Forest Officer, and Range Forest Officer training schools.

Teams ready with cages, tranquiliser

Three teams of forest officials have been stationed in Singasandra near Electronic City here to catch a leopard that was reportedly spotted in the area, officials said on Monday.

Around 30 members from the forest department with tranquiliser guns have been deployed in and around Singasandra.

"Our team is already stationed in the area. Cages have already been placed," Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden of Karnataka Subhash K Malkhede told PTI.

"We have asked the doctor at the Bannerghatta Zoo to be there with medicines and as a precautionary measure, our forest officials with tranquiliser guns have also been deployed in the area. As soon as we spot it (the leopard), we will take it away and tranquilise it if required," he added.

A video, which claimed that the leopard was spotted near Whitefield recently, went viral on social media platforms on Sunday.

However, Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) S S Lingaraja said the video was shot in Singasandra -- which is close to Bannerghatta National Park -- and not Whitefield.

"The leopard was first spotted on the premises of an apartment. Thereafter, it went out on the road where it was spotted again. Our staff is trying to locate the leopard. We have been keeping a close watch. We are keeping vigil. We have already placed cages near Singasandra and our teams are trying to locate the leopard," Lingaraja said. **PTI**

Flat residents' worry: Dangerous turn ahead

Residents living in apartment complexes in Subramanyapura are worried about a surge in hit-and-run cases on the road off Gubbalala Main Road. They say the 100-metre stretch with a sharp turn has become an accident hotspot in the absence of traffic calming tools.

The most recent and third accident case in a little over a month was on Saturday morning when a young florist riding her bike was hit by a car. The florist was thrown in the air due to the impact. Locals say the accidents have shaken them and it is time authorities install speed bumps on the stretch to ensure the vehicles slow down mandatorily before they turn at the curve.

"Luckily, the florist escaped with a few stitches to her head. However, with the increase in vehicular traffic and lack of a mechanism to slow down the vehicles, a major accident is round the corner if authorities do not act immediately," said a resident.

Locals highlight that the busy stretch is used by pedestrians too. Many school buses drop children on the other side of the stretch and kids cross the road regularly.

"Commercial and private vehicles zoom past the stretch while they are inclined at the curve. The situation becomes serious as there are two apartment complexes with nearly 800 families that are on this road. Apart from pedestrians, street vendors, and the elderly using the stretch, school children are frequently dropped and picked up. While some school buses drop them right in front of their home gates so they do not have to cross the stretch, others drop them on the opposite side so they have to cross it.

> **100-m stretch in Subramanyapura becomes accident spot sans speed breakers ahead of sharp curve**

The residents' group has now reached out to the Police department and BBMP, demanding that the stretch be made safer.

"We have reached out to the nearest police station and briefed police officials on the situation. A team visited the spot and inspected it as well. We have also written to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, requesting the official concerned to construct some kind of speed breaker on both sides of the road so vehicles mandatorily slow down at the curve," said another resident of the area. **— BMB**

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'Release 2,600 cusecs water to TN for 15 days'

K'taka tells Cauvery Authority about almost nil inflows into 4 reservoirs

The Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) has directed the Karnataka government to release 2,600 cusecs of water every day for the next 15 days, that is, November 15, 2023.

In the meeting of the Cauvery Water Control Committee held in the national capital, the Karnataka government made the submission before the CWRC requesting to report to the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), that in light of "almost nil" inflows into the four reservoirs so as to reach Biligundlu (on the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu border) except that would be contributed from the uncontrolled catchment.

The Tamil Nadu government, on the other hand, demanded its Karnataka counterpart to ensure the release of 13,000 cusecs of water every day for the next 15 days.

Meanwhile, Karnataka had been releasing 3,000 of Cauvery water every day for the last 15 days.

Earlier this month, at the CWRC meeting, the Karnataka government was directed to ensure the release of 3,000 cusecs of water daily from the Cauvery between October 16 and October 31.

In September this year, the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee ordered Karnataka to ensure the release of 3,000 cusecs of Cauvery water at Biligundlu starting from September 28 till October 15, 2023.

Karnataka filed a review petition against the order both in the Supreme Court and in the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA).

Karnataka government had cited a severe drought in parts of its state to refuse the supply of water to Tamil Nadu. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on October 5 said that cumulative inflows into the reservoirs in Karnataka's Cauvery basin are decreasing.

Meanwhile, the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Monday, October 9, 2023, adopted a resolution urging the Union government to direct Karnataka to release Cauvery water as per the orders of the Cauvery Water Management Authority. The resolution was passed unanimously.

The govts of K'taka and TN have been locked in a protracted tussle over the sharing of Cauvery waters. The river is seen as a major source of sustenance for the people in either state

The governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have been locked in a protracted tussle over the sharing of Cauvery waters. The river is seen as a major source of sustenance for the people in either state.

The Centre formed the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) on June 2, 1990, to adjudicate disputes between Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Puducherry with respect to their individual water-sharing capacities. **ANI**

DEATH DAMAGES: KSRTC raises compensation amount

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has increased the relief amount for its Employees' Family Welfare Scheme from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 10 lakh. This scheme is apart from the Rs 1-crore accident relief compensation for employees who lose their lives while on or off duty. So far, seven cases have received this compensation.

Apart from accidents, there have been unfortunate incidents of employee deaths due to illnesses such as cancer, stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, resulting in over 100 employee deaths every year.

To support the families facing financial difficulties due to the loss of the breadwinning member, the KSRTC has made a move to increase the relief amount from Rs 3 to 10 lakh.

Employees who are currently contributing Rs 100 per month will now contribute Rs 200, while the corporation will increase its contribution from Rs 50 to Rs 100 on behalf of each employee. This revised scheme will be effective from November 1 and will apply to incidents of employee death occurring thereafter. **BMB**

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I Guru raj.M.A R/o No-68,1st cross,Durgaparameshwari Nagar,RR Nagar, B'luru 560098 have changed my name to Gururaj for all purposes.

I Rahaman Khan S/O, Habeeb Khan R/o 29/3 Khans Mansion An Gupta Layout Lakkasandra Extension Bangalore 560030 have changed my name to Rahman Khan.

I, Vidyashri d/o Nagaraju Krishnaraju, R/o 108, 3rd Main, Near Isro Layout, Paul Chinnappa Layout, Bikasipura, B'luru-560061, have Changed my Name to Vidyashri N vide Affidavit Dt: 30/10/2023, before Notary B S Padmaprasad, B'luru.

I, Amrish Kumar R/o House No-11, First Floor, First Cross, Shobha Gopinath Building, Sai Colony, Kadugodi, Bengaluru, Karnataka, Pin-560067 have changed my minor son's name from Aarav Bhagyesh to Atharv Aarav.

I, BINDU.T.J, aged about 47 Years, D/o Joseph Thottakath, R/at St.Teresa,s Generalate Geddalahally, Kothanur Post, Bangalore- 560077, have changed my name to TERESITA THOTTAKATH CSST vide affidavit dated: 30/10/2023 Before Notary S.R. Paramashivaiah Bangalore.

Change of Name

I, Navyashree K S, r/at No. 305/1, 13th Cross, Sun City Main Road, Kengeri, Bangalore 560 060 hereby declare that my name is entered as Navyashree K in my education records and in my Aadhaar Card entered my correct name as Navyashree K S vide affidavit dt. 27.10.2023 sworn before Notary GB Turamari, Bangalore

Trash-trapped: Skywalk at Hebbal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

accumulated garbage on both sides of the skywalk, especially at the bus stop situated near the military compound wall, Chitresh Srivatsav, a PhD scholar at Jain University and resident of Akshay Nagar, said the authorities have to take measures to keep the bus stop and skywalk clean and neat.

"The authorities did nothing to clear garbage for many months. There is no security for people who wait at the bus stop. I want the police to visit the bus stop once or twice at night," said Srivatsav.

Stating that around 2,000 to 3,000 people use the bus stop to board Andhra Pradesh and Telangana-bound buses every day, Selwyn Mascarenhas, a resident, told BM that the bus stop is left pitch dark at night.

"There is no street light near the bus stop. There are no lights at the bus stop. The entire skywalk is dirty. Some people urinate here and the place stinks," said Mascarenhas.

When contacted, BBMP solid waste management assistant executive engineer Shivakumar said the skywalk and the bus stop are under the jurisdiction of the NHAI.

"I will send people to clear garbage even though it is the responsibility of the NHAI to maintain the skywalk and the bus stop," said Shivakumar.

Meanwhile, NHAI project manager Subhashish Kundu assured to send workers to keep the skywalk and bus stop clean.

"I will look into the matter and take measures to remove garbage from the skywalk," said Kundu.

Bifurcate dog bite cases, PHCs told

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cases of pet dog bites but mostly the pet owners reach out to PHCs for treatment.

Currently, these cases are being clubbed with street dog bite cases, and slandering street dogs. Pet dog bites happen when pet dogs are left unmonitored, walked unleashed, and left to guard without supervision.

Moreover, when it comes to street dogs, one can always check the vaccination schedule of the street dogs with local BBMP officials. However, no such records are available in the case of pet dogs," said Sudha Narayanan, founder of CARE (Charlie's Animal Rescue Centre), which manages BBMP's rabies helpline.

Many are of the view the step will make dog owners accountable for non-vaccination and abandoning their pets, forcing them to take corrective measures and thus reducing dog bite incidents.

"This initiative will make pet owners accountable. When a bystander or a visitor suffers due to a pet dog bite, the responsibility should be on the pet owner," said Priya Chetty Rajagopal, an animal welfare activist.

Number of rabid dog cases on decline

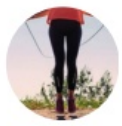
According to the animal husbandry department, the number of rabid dogs in the city has been on a constant decline. BBMP recorded 213 cases of rabid dogs within its limits in 2021. This number went down to 129 in 2022. Only 67 rabid dog cases have been reported this year so far.

The number of dog bite cases has also ebbed considerably in Bengaluru. While 36,672 dog bite cases were recorded in 2017, followed by 38,978 cases in 2018 and 42,818 cases in 2019, a sharp decline was noticed thereafter. Only 18,629 dog bite cases were reported in 2020, followed by 17,610 cases in 2021, and 22,945 cases in 2022. Between January and September 2023, 15,285 dog bite cases have been recorded by the civic body.

Officials updated BM that no human deaths due to rabies have been recorded this year in Bengaluru so far in comparison to 12 deaths across Karnataka.

"We have recorded zero human deaths due to rabies in Bengaluru this year. If we take the exception of the pandemic period (2020-2022), the number of dog bite cases has also declined significantly. This is due to the uninterrupted mass vaccination and Animal Birth Control program started by BBMP in 2020," said an official from the BBMP's animal husbandry department.

HEALTH TIP: When you minimise sodium intake, you also reduce water retention, and this helps keep your abdomen light



Before starting your exercise routine, try the jumping rope—do it for a minute and raise to about five minutes

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What happens next?

Humans have been fascinated with the afterlife since ancient Mesopotamia

As Halloween approaches, we start to think about ghosts, monsters, and demons.

But a fascination with the afterlife and other worlds is not new: ghost stories from all over the world prove it's been part of the human experience from prehistoric times.

Even before the invention of writing over 5,000 years ago, humans were being buried alongside goods that could be useful in their afterlife, such as drinking vessels or weapons.

Though there is some debate about the meaning of prehistoric grave goods, Mesopotamian ghost expert Irving Finkel persuasively argues they reflect a belief that something of the dead person would persevere into an afterlife. There, the grave goods could be put to use.

Mesopotamian demons in popular culture

Mesopotamia, an historical area located roughly in the region of modern-day Iraq, was home to some of the world's great empires.

Ancient Mesopotamian ghosts and demons are perhaps best known today from their presence in horror films. In Ghostbusters (1984), Sigourney Weaver's Dana is possessed by Zuul, a minion of the fictional god Gozer, who was worshipped as a demigod by the Sumerians in the film's backstory.

In the novel and film, The Exorcist (1973), 12-year-old Regan is possessed by Pazuzu, a fictional demon based on Assyrian and Babylonian mythology.

The mythic Pazuzu appears in visual sources from around the 8th century BCE and was considered king of the wind demons.

In contrast to the plot of The Exorcist, Pazuzu's terrifying visage was used in white magic to protect children from the lion-headed demoness Lamashtu.

And in Evil Dead (1981), the evil comes from an ancient Sumerian book, the Necronomicon Ex-Mortis, bound in human flesh and inked in blood, which can release evil into the world when certain passages are read aloud. (The book is actually the fictional invention of writer H.P. Lovecraft.)

The influence of supernatural beings in these works is largely malevolent. But the connection between the living and the dead in ancient Mesopotamia was complex – and sometimes, it was mutually beneficial.

Ghosts were an accepted part of life in ancient Mesopotamia. Death was thought to gradually weaken the connections that bound the deceased person to the land of the living, rather than bring an abrupt, complete exit.

In some areas, this concept has endured. Modern-day science fiction writer Philip K. Dick, best known for his novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? (filmed as Bladerunner) presents death in similarly incomplete terms in writings such as What the Dead Men Say (1964) and Ubik (1969). In these stories, the recently deceased maintain some capacity to interact with the living shortly after death.

The first ghost

In Mesopotamian myth, humanity was created – along with the first ghost – through the death of a rebellious god.

The origin of ghosts is explained in the Mesopotamian myth of Atrahasis, a Babylonian flood narrative often paralleled with the story of Noah's ark.

In this myth, humans are created by senior gods, to perform the menial work of the lesser gods, who have gone on strike. The leader of the rebellion is killed, and his body and blood are mixed with clay to create humans. The spirit of the dead god is also mixed into the new creation, meaning his rebellious etemmu ("spirit") becomes part of humanity.

The combination of god and earth gives the humans a mortal body and an immortal soul. As long as each human lives, the ghost of the dead god within them is signalled through the steady "drumbeat" of the pulse.

Friendly ghosts?

Written sources reflect many types of Mesopotamian ghosts, and many different ways to manage them. The nature of a ghost, either friendly or malevolent, could be influenced by several factors.

Dying in tragic circumstances could create an unhappy ghost, while some ghosts were just innately difficult to get along with – as can sometimes be the case with the living. Magic spells were used to free a person of a ghost's presence, and rituals were used to send the ghost safely on its way to the afterlife.

While ghosts, like demons, were viewed as capable of causing harm to the living, they could also be helpful. Family ghosts could protect their relatives from evil and intercede on their behalf with the gods. Families had responsibilities to care for their deceased loved ones by providing them with appropriate grave goods and funerary rituals.

The ability of dead ancestors to help the living with their problems is also reflected in ancient Egyptian sources. The Egyptian dead were thought capable of helping the living with everything from earthly problems, such as illness, to supernatural issues, such as a safe transition to the afterlife.

Returning from the dead

Once they were in the afterlife, the dead would journey to the underworld – but this was not necessarily a one-way trip. Behaviours in the upper world, such as mourning rites, had significant consequences for those below. Ghosts and demons were thought capable of periodically rising – and haunting or otherwise interfering with living mortals.

The most famous return from the underworld in Mesopotamian literature occurs in the myth, Ishtar's Descent to the Underworld. In this myth, the powerful Mesopotamian goddess of love and war, Ishtar, journeys to the underworld and attempts to overthrow its ruler, Ereshkigal.

Ishtar is killed by Ereshkigal, but revived through the help of the god of wisdom. She returns to the upper world, and sends her husband, Tammuz, down to the underworld in her place. Myth scholar Annette Zgoll has argued that the story shows Ishtar bringing the powers of the underworld back with her, making a return from the afterlife possible.

Ishtar is not the only figure from Mesopotamian myth who is connected to the journey between our world and the underworld. The world's first epic hero, Gilgamesh, becomes a funerary god after his death.

As a judge of the underworld, Gilgamesh played a critical role in maintaining positive relationships between the living and the dead.

In ritual poetry directed towards family ghosts, Gilgamesh is asked to intervene between a living person and their deceased ancestor. Gilgamesh's authority over the dead meant his permission allowed deceased ancestors to receive offerings made to them.

Who ya gonna call?

The activities of ghosts in Mesopotamia could also be influenced by human religious specialists. Necromancers could summon ghosts and speak to them – as in Evil Dead's Necronomicon Ex-Mortis.

Professional necromancers could perform a range of ghost-related functions, such as answering questions from the living, assisting with purification, or performing black magic. The close bonds between loved ones in ancient Mesopotamia continued after death. Maintaining these ties was thought to enable mutually beneficial relationships between the living and the dead. But neglected spirits were thought to haunt the living and create mischief.

Indeed, there was an element of danger to neglecting the dead: ghosts could possibly turn into demons, which might return to terrify the living if they were disturbed or improperly buried.

At Halloween, it's natural to be afraid of apparitions and otherworldly creatures. But exploring their origins in the ancient world may make them seem less haunting – and perhaps, more human.

(By Louise Pryke, University of Sydney, The Conversation)

All you need to know about...

Male infertility

Culprit protein
German researchers have identified a protein, loss of which resulted in male infertility among mice.

Production of sperm
Mature spermatozoa are characterised by a head, midpiece and a long tail for locomotion.
Male sperm cells are constantly produced in large quantities in the testicles during so-called spermatogenesis.
In this process, the typical elongated sperm cells are formed from round germ cells. This enormous change in shape requires the fine tuned reorganisation of specialised structural proteins.

Structural protein loss
The team from the University Hospital Bonn (UKB) in Germany found that loss of the structural protein ACTL7B blocks the process of spermatogenesis in male mice.
The cells can no longer develop their characteristic shape and remain in a rather round form. The animals are infertile. The results are published in the journal Development.

Gene-editing tech used
"Since it is exclusively made in humans and mice during the maturation of male sperm, it has been postulated that the protein is important for this phase of development," said Prof. Hubert Schorle from the Institute of Pathology at UKB. To investigate the role of the structural protein in spermiogenesis, Prof. Schorle's team generated a mouse model with a mutation in the Actl7b gene using gene-editing technology. This results in a complete loss of function of ACTL7B.

Keep in mind
"Without ACTL7B, development is blocked, the cells remain in a roundish shape, usually do not form the elongated, typical sperm shape and die to a large extent," said first author Gina Esther Merges. —IANS

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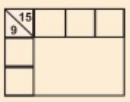
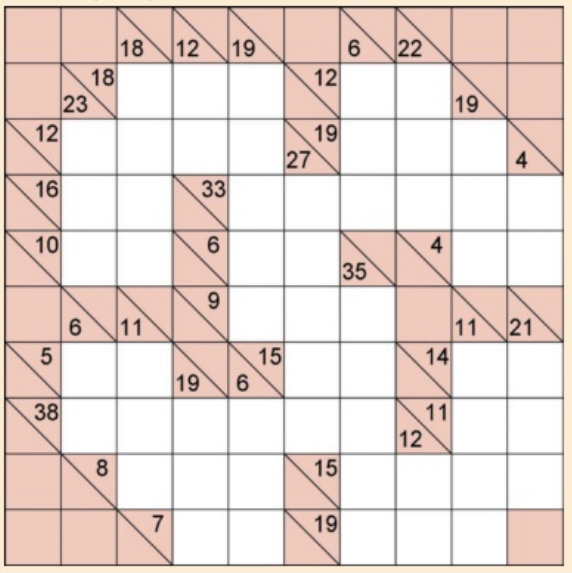
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

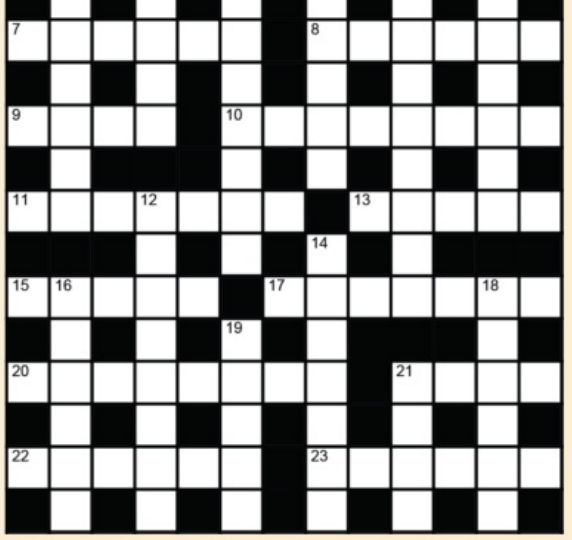


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Summerhouse (6)
8 Stage plays (6)
9 Treats leather (4)
10 National park between Mysore and Ooty (8)
11 Small seals–"Ingests" anagram? (7)
13 Limited in size (5)
15 Bear a load (5)
17 The devil? (3,4)
20 Full length apron? (8)
21 Air in motion (4)
22 Cutting edges of tools or knives (6)
23 ___ on : inciting or urging; goading (6)

DOWN

1 Seasoned sausage (6)
2 Animal doctors, in short (4)
3 National park in Uttarakhand (7)
4 Utopias or heavens (5)
5 Lucky charm (8)
6 ___ workers: they are given daily wages? (6)
12 D-Day landing site (8)
14 Support for rail line (7)
16 Keenly or eagerly (6)
18 Tooth between the incisors and premolars (6)
19 Din (5)
21 Hair pieces (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: S EQUALS H

SY TSA MRXXAD GAEHLFY ZEY-RNI DSY ZELOHY AFYE TSLMS SY SLVIYBG VWID CRII.

Linemaro

Your smile could illuminate the depths of the ocean

Mindchow

Dreams are today's answers to tomorrow's questions

Joke of the day

Ever notice that people who spend money on beer, cigarettes, and lottery tickets are always complaining about being broke and not feeling well?

Loop

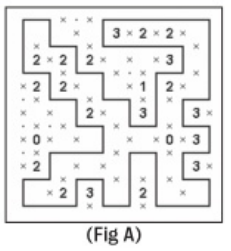
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

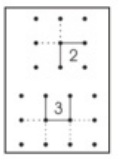
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

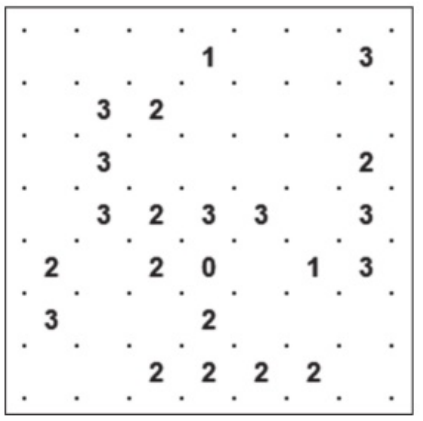
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



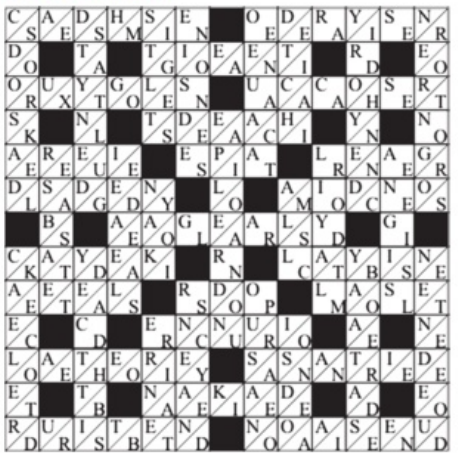
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



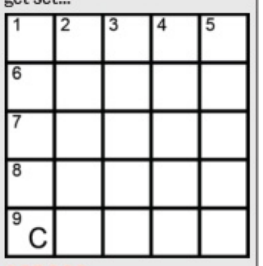
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Spilt; 6 Do ere;
7 Dears; 8 Aahed;
9 Lu cry

DOWN

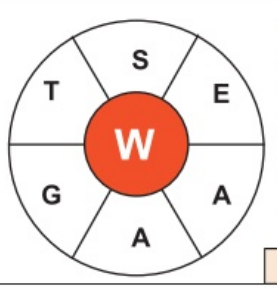
1 Cares; 2 Rah up;
3 Lores; 4 Ailed;
5 Yet DD

Mensapuzzle

What two numbers should replace the question marks?

0, 1, 2, 5, 20, 25, ?, ?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

3			8		4			2
7		6	2		5	1		8
		9				3		
	6		1		2		8	
	5		3		9		1	
		4				8		
9		2	7		3	6		1
5			4		6			3

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 4

2 3 5 6

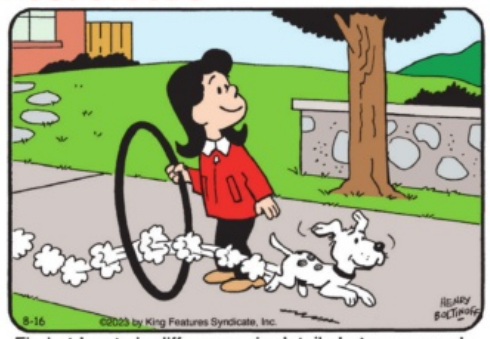
Medium = 12

2 3 4 5

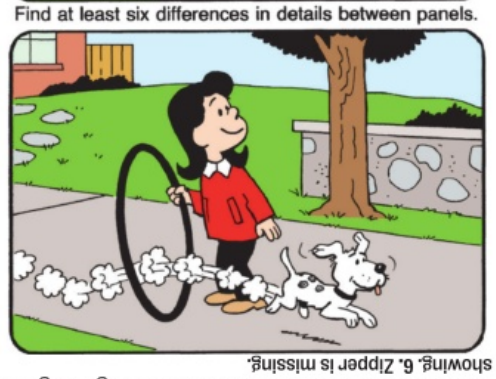
Hard = 16

2 5 8 5

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



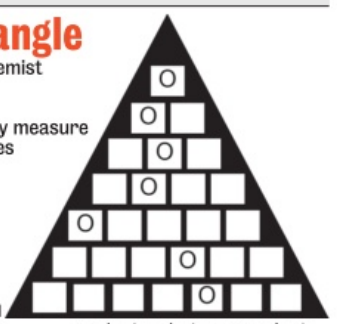
Differences: 1. Mountain is missing. 2. Stepping stone is moved. 3. Tail is moved. 4. Tree is moved. 5. Dog's tongue is showing. 6. Zipper is missing.

Riddler

Jack is looking at Anne, but Anne is looking at George. Jack is married, but George is not. Is a married person looking at an unmarried person?
A) Yes B) No C) Cannot be determined

Alpha triangle

1 Oxygen for the chemist
2 Not off
3 Male child
4 Horse race victory measure
5 Pizza place fixtures
6 Of the veins
7 Apprehensive



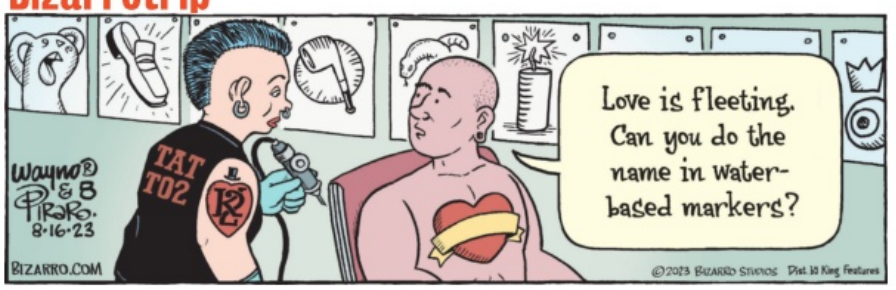
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

Bizarrotrip


Love is fleeting. Can you do the name in water-based markers?
Wayno & Piraro 8-16-23
BIZARRO.COM
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Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

QUIET! I'M TRYING TO WORK UP THE COURAGE TO TALK TO DEAN AGAIN.
HAHA!
COURAGE? FOR DEAN?!
SSHHH!
SORRY, BUT WHAT'S THE HOLD UP? YOU TWO ARE CUT FROM THE SAME NERDY CLOTH.
I KNOW! I LIKE THAT HE LIKES THE SAME STUFF AS ME.
BUT I GET THE FEELING HE DOESN'T LIKE ME VERY MUCH, AND I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY.
OH, HE LIKES YOU. HE JUST DOESN'T KNOW IT YET. HE'S A GOOD KID, BUT STILL A DUMB BOY.

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may be blessed by the moon. Love would be in the air in terms of personal life. Singles may find a suitable match. You may do better in terms of your professional life. Your friends and subordinate staff may support you. Investments in gems and jewellery are likely to yield positive gains in the near future. Should be careful for the elders' health.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may be happy due to a blessing from an auspicious planetary combination. You may have some sort of energy, which may increase your prestige among people around you. You may spend your time studying intellectual stuff.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, at the start of the day, it may be dull. After late evening, you may control negativity. New people may connect with you on the work front. With the help of new people, you may try to revamp your business plans. It is advised to read documents before putting your signature.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, with the help of blessings, you may control your indecisiveness. Your kid's health is better now. Your colleagues may be supportive of your work, which will convert into success in terms of the project. You may expect to get some incentives with the salary. Natives related to dairy, water projects, grains, homemakers, art, and culture may do well.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may plan to migrate from your current place to another place. It is advised to think twice before making decisions regarding migration or a change of place. You may also plan to change jobs. There will be peace in the mind. But your kids' health might make you upset. It is advised to avoid speculation in investments. Love birds shall keep patience before taking an important decision in terms of marriage.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may have good patience. Meditation may help you increase your concentration, which may help speed up your project. Your subordinates may cooperate with you, which may help you complete the project before the deadline. You are likely to go on some short trips related to work. An influential person may help you boost your network.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may be busy with family get-togethers and social events. You may become polite with the people around you, which may increase your prestige among them. You may spend money on buying some artefacts or household stuff, which may improve your social status. You are likely to hear some good news from one of your relatives.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today you will be busy with family get-togethers. You may re-establish your network, which will give you benefits in the near future. Natives related to glamour, art, fashion, films, and media may plan to do something new in terms of their profession. Students may perform better today in terms of study. Love birds may enjoy their happy moments.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today you may be busy at work, which may make you mentally tired and may affect your daily routine. You may be able to create an overseas network. You should be careful in terms of investments. Natives in the job may get promoted.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, the situation is under control. Your destiny is likely to be with you in terms of gains from past investments. You may get some rewards for your hard work. Projects that were stopped without reason are likely to be reinitiated. You may expect peaceful religious travel. You may also plan to donate some amount to any religious place or to some charity.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, your moon is not positive; you may have health issues. You may face losses in the business or in past investments. It is advised not to invest in business. Your gains will be converted into losses. So you are advised to stop making investments in worthless objects. You should avoid being involved in controversies; otherwise, it will pull you down negatively.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today is good for your work; you may be able to perform well in terms of work. Your boss is likely to give you some new responsibility in terms of promotions. Disputes with the partner may be settled. You may lend money to build your assets. Your kid's health may be better now. You are likely to make some investments for the kid's future.

KIDZONE

Dia Nithin, 10 years, Clarence High School

Dhanush Pallavi, 12 years, Ichha Public School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= (−32)^3/5 / (−2)^5
= (−2^5)^3/5 / (−2)^5
= (−2)^3 / (−2)^5
= (−2)^−3
= 1/(−2)^3
= −1/8

BULL'S EYE
stew, swag, swat, sweat, wage, WASTAGE, waste, west

STRIKE OUT

C	A	S	H	I	N	E	E	R	I	E	R	I	E	R
O	T	G	I	A	N	T	R	O	O	X	Y	G	E	N
A	C	C	O	S	T	K	L	T	E	A	C	H	N	O
E	T	N	A	I	A	D	D	E	E	R	E	I	S	I
L	A	H	O	R	E	S	N	A	R	E	D	D	U	S
E	C	E	N	N	U	I	A	E	P	I	N	A	F	O
E	T	A	L	S	O	P	L	O	S	E	V	Y	M	N
K	A	Y	A	K	R	C	A	B	I	N	C	A	R	R
B	E	A	G	E	R	L	Y	G	O	T	S	A	S	S
D	A	D	D	Y	L	M	O	D	E	S	S	I	G	N
E	R	E	I	S	I	T	L	E	A	R	M	E	S	S
K	L	T	E	A	C	H	N	O	T	A	N	S	B	A
O	X	Y	G	E	N	A	C	C	O	S	T	L	T	R
C	A	S	H	I	N	E	E	R	I	E	R	O	C	E

QUICK

Y	Y	E	R	S	E									
B	L	A	D	E	S	E	G	G	I	N	G			
D	N	I	P	I	I									
P	I	N	A	F	O	R	W	I	N	D				
V	M	N	E	A										
C	A	R	R	Y	O	L	D	N	I	C	K			
S	I	G	N	E	T	S	S	M	A	L	L			
M	E	S	S	A										
T	A	N	S	B	A	N	D	I	P	U	R			
L	T	R	E	L	S									
G	A	Z	E	B	O	O	R	A	M	A	S			

MENSA PUZZLE
150, 157: the sequence progresses +1, ×2, +3, ×4, +5, ×6, +7

RIDDLER
A) Yes. If Anne is married, she's looking at George, who is unmarried. If Anne is unmarried, Jack is looking at her.

SUDOKU

3	1	5	8	9	4	7	6	2
7	4	6	2	3	5	1	9	8
8	2	9	6	1	7	2	5	4
4	6	3	1	7	2	5	8	9
6	3	4	9	2	1	8	7	5
2	5	8	3	6	9	4	1	7
1	9	7	5	4	8	2	3	6
9	8	2	7	5	3	6	4	1
5	7	1	4	8	6	9	2	3

ALPHA TRIANGLE
0, On, Son, Nose, Ovens, Venous, Nervous.

LOOP

GO FIGURE
2 − 6 + 5 + 3 = 4
Easy
5 − 3 + 4 × 2 = 12
Medium
2 × 5 / 5 × 8 = 16
Hard

KAKURO

QUOTE UNCODE
He who cannot forgive breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass.

FAST FIVE

S	P	L	I	T
E	R	O	D	E
R	A	S	E	D
A	H	E	A	D
C	U	R	L	Y

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SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Big applause

Debutant director-cum-producer Arjun Krishna is over the moon about appreciation from not only his childhood friend Yash but also from Bollywood director-cum-producer Subhash Ghai for the teaser of his maiden film DAD (Devaraj alias David). DAD is being presented by Radhika Yash.

"Yash and I are childhood friends and we studied in the same school. We struggled a lot to realise our childhood dreams. Directing movies is my passion. I worked at a bank after my MBA. I made a short movie – Aham – nine years ago. Now, I am directing DAD. I sent its teaser to Yash. He called me over the phone and appreciated me its quality," said Arjun Krishna. Shivahari Varma, an alumnus of Subhash Ghai Music School, has scored the background music for DAD. "Shivahari sent the teaser to Subhash Ghai who also appreciated it," said Arjun Krishna.

According to the director, DAD revolves around a common man and his problems and what he would do if there is no end to his problems. "Every human being has two shades. All human beings want to be good and lead life without any hassles. I want to showcase the other shade of the human being when he is trapped in problems," he said.

True hero

Roshan M Rao from Gowribidanur of Kolar is elated to be able to realise his dream of acting in a Kannada movie. Roshan, who lost his parents as a child, is not only playing the lead in Bhairya KA-07 but also writing its script, dialogues and directing it.

"I lost my parents when I was child. I had to work at eateries to make ends meet. I am a hard-core fan of Rocking Star Yash. After earning some money by working at eateries, I joined a dance school to get training in classical dance and later I went to Mumbai to join a film institute," said Roshan.

He said that he wanted to do something for his district (Kolar) by making a movie to showcase people who struggled

a lot to protect Kolar Gold Fields. "The movie highlights the incidents that took place between 1970 and 1985. My movie has nothing to do with the movie KGF," he said, adding that Bhairya Ak-07 revolves around people from Chikkaballapur, KGF, Chintamani, Sidlaghatta.

Shareefa Begum Nadaf from Bagalkot is bankrolling the movie which has completed a 60-day schedule of shooting.

HALLOWEEN QUEENS

Katrina Kaif to Janhvi Kapoor, take a look at cracking Hallows Eve style

Halloween is almost here and every year this festival is celebrated on October 31.

In recent years, we've noticed several B-town celebs slaying their spooky looks during this festival.

Costume parties are always fun and exciting, and our favourite celebs like Janhvi Kapoor, Sonam Kapoor, and Katrina Kaif know how to get into the spirit of the occasion with zeal.

Take a look at some of the celebs-inspired costume ideas for Halloween.

Katrina Kaif as Harley Quinn

Last year on Halloween, Katrina shared her stunning look as Harley Quinn sporting everything from famous blonde ponytails to an eclectic mix of blue and pink eyeshadow. She paired her striped shorts with a pink top and a transparent jacket with frills in funky colours on the sleeves. In one of the pictures, she also had the signature baseball bat on her shoulders and flashed a wicked grin. Fun, chunky accessories elevated her Harley Quinn avatar.

Janhvi Kapoor as Morticia Addams from The Addams Family

Janhvi Kapoor wowed her fans last year when she channelled her inner Morticia Addams for the Halloween party. Shei nailed her ghostly-glam style with long, sleek hair, an off-the-shoulder black dress, smokey eyes, and dramatic dark lips!

Sonam Kapoor as Marilyn Monroe

A few years back, Sonam Kapoor's Halloween transformation into style icon Marilyn Monroe became popular on Instagram. Everything about her look was flawless, from her cosmetics to her clothes.

Ananya Panday as Poo

Actor Ananya Panday's Halloween 2022 look was inspired by actor Kareena Kapoor Khan's Poo character from the film 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham'. Even the original Poo couldn't stop herself and she also gave a thumbs-up to Ananya's look. Kareena wrote on her Instagram stories, "You looked PHAT." 'Phat' is a slang which means 'pretty, hot, and tempting'

Shanaya Kapoor as Mia Thermopolis

If you're not a fan of spooky outfits, you can still opt for a princess look, just like Shanaya Kapoor did for a Halloween party last year. She made head turns with her look as Princess of Genovia, Mia Thermopolis, from the popular movie The Princess Diaries."

—ANI

Watch this story come alive by pointing your phone camera at the QR code

Red hot
What to rock a red saree for festivities? Take inspiration from these divas

Elliot admits he fell in love for 'selfish' reasons

Actor Elliot Page opened up about his love life, saying that he's not dating anyone at the moment and that he's enjoying being on his own because he had developed a bad habit of getting into relationships for "selfish" reasons.

"I feel exhilarated by the fact that I can be alone. I'm very much enjoying connecting with people, maybe having some fun, but sort of just being on my own right now. So, I'm single," Elliot, 36, explained to Jay Shetty in the 'On Purpose' podcast, reports aceshowbiz.com.

The transgender 'Juno' star announced his transition in December 2020. Prior to his transition, Elliot dated Samantha Thomas and was married to Emma Portner for two years, reports aceshowbiz.com.

Speaking about his past romances, the actor said that he didn't always get into relationships for the right reasons.

—IANS